

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 17, 2010

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2009—10 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1997

Introduced by Assembly Member Portantino

February 17, 2010

An act to amend Section 69433 of the Education Code, relating to student financial aid.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1997, as amended, Portantino. Community colleges: student financial aid programs: application forms.

Existing law establishes various student financial aid programs under the administration of the Student Aid Commission, and establishes eligibility requirements under these programs for participating students attending qualifying institutions.

Existing law requires the commission to authorize the use of standardized student financial aid application forms and requires these forms to be used for the Cal Grant Program and all other programs funded by the state or a public institution of postsecondary education, except that a simplified form may be used for a specified financial assistance program of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges.

This bill would instead authorize a community college district to use the simplified form solely for purposes of specified fee waivers provided by the board of governors, *solely on a case-by-case basis*, and only under certain circumstances. The bill would require a community college district that elects to use the simplified form to annually report to the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges the number of simplified forms used and its justifications for the use of that form.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 69433 of the Education Code is amended
2 to read:

3 69433. (a) (1) A Cal Grant Program award shall be based
4 upon the financial need of the applicant, and shall not exceed the
5 calculated financial need for any individual applicant. The
6 minimum level of financial need of each applicant shall be
7 determined by the commission pursuant to Section 69432.9. The
8 commission may provide renewal awards.

9 (2) A student attending a nonpublic institution shall receive a
10 renewal award for tuition or fees, or both, in an amount not to
11 exceed the maximum allowable award amount that was in effect
12 in the year in which the student first received a new award.

13 (b) A Cal Grant award authorized pursuant to this chapter shall
14 be defined as a full-time equivalent grant. An award to a part-time
15 student shall be a fraction of a full-time grant, as determined by
16 the commission.

17 (c) (1) The commission shall prescribe the use of standardized
18 student financial aid applications for California. These applications
19 shall be simple in nature, and collect common data elements
20 required by the federal government and those elements needed to
21 meet the objectives of state-funded and institutional financial aid
22 programs.

23 (2) (A) The applications prescribed in paragraph (1) shall be
24 used for the Cal Grant Program, all other programs funded by the
25 state or a public institution of postsecondary education, and all
26 federal programs administered by a public postsecondary education
27 institution.

28 (B) Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), a community college
29 district may use a simplified form solely for purposes of fee
30 waivers from the Board of Governors of the California Community
31 Colleges under Section 76300. The community college district
32 may use the simplified form *solely on a case-by-case basis and*
33 *only in those cases in which it is determined by the governing*
34 *board of the district to be appropriate by a campus authority with*
35 *responsibility for student financial aid programs.* If a community

1 college district elects to use a simplified form pursuant to this
2 subparagraph, the district shall annually report to the Chancellor
3 of the California ~~community~~ *Community* Colleges the number of
4 simplified forms used by the district and its justifications for the
5 use of that form.

6 (3) Supplemental application information may be used if the
7 information is essential to accomplishing the objectives of
8 individual programs. All supplemental application information
9 used for the purposes of commission-administered programs shall
10 be subject to approval by the commission, and applications shall
11 be identical for programs with similar objectives, as determined
12 by the commission.

13 (4) Public postsecondary institutions are encouraged to use, but
14 may decide whether to use, the standard applications for funds
15 provided by private donors.

16 (5) The Legislature finds and declares that it is in the best
17 interest of students that all postsecondary education institutions in
18 California participating in federal and state-funded financial aid
19 programs accept the standard applications prescribed by the
20 commission.

21 (d) Nothing in this chapter shall prevent an individual public
22 postsecondary institution from processing, with its own staff and
23 fiscal resources, the standard financial aid applications specified
24 in subdivision (c) for student aid programs for which it has legal
25 responsibility.

26 (e) The commission may enter into contracts with a public
27 agency or a private entity to improve the processing and
28 distribution of grants, fellowships, and loans through the use of
29 electronic networks and unified databases.